An Abridgement of

THE WAY OF SPIRITUAL CHIVALRY

by Abu ʻAbd al-Rahman ibn al-Husayn al-Sulami

كتاب الفتوة

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Taken from the English rendering of the Arabic text

by Shaykh Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi entitled *The Way of Sufi Chivalry*

with a topical reorganization and additional passages from related texts

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The abridgement is based upon the book *The Way of Sufi Chivalry*, rendered from the original Arabic *Kitab al-Futuwwah* into English by Shaykh Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi (Inner Traditions International, Rochester Vermont, 1993). Copyright © 1983, 1991 Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi.

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﴿﴾: Qur'an; English rendering from Abdullah Yusuf ʻAli

Q: Qushayri (Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri al-Nisaburi), *al-Risala al-Qushayriyya*; English translation, *Principles of Sufism*, by B.R. von Schlegell

Z: Zakariyya al-Ansari (Shaykh al-Islam Zakariyya al-Ansari), *Sharh al-Risala al-Qushayriyya*

A: Arusi (Mustafa al-ʻArusi), Nata'ij al-Afkar al-Qudsiyya fi Bayan Ma'ani Sharh al-Risala al-Qushayriyya

N: Nawawi (Abu Zakariyya Yahya ibn Sharaf al-Nawawi), *Riyad al-Salihin*

T: al-Targhib wa-al-Tarhib (Zakiy al-Din ʻAbd al-ʻAdhim al-Mundhiri), *al-Targhib wa-al-Tarhib*

1 Preface

All praise is due to Allah, Whose gifts are eternal, and all power belongs to Allah Most High,

﴿وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ وَلِيٌّ مِّنَ الذُّلِّ ۖ وَكَبِّرْهُ تَكْبِيرًا﴾

Who begets no son, and has no partner in His dominion; nor needs He any to protects Him from humiliation – yea, magnify Him for His greatness and glory! (Koran 17:111)

All thanks are due to Allah, Who showed the signs of His generosity in His chosen servants, driving them to obedience and saving them from revolt; and informed us that their state is the state of His Friends (s.a.w.s.).

In the Holy Koran He says:

﴿قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا فَتًى يَذْكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ﴾

> They said: We heard a noble youth [*fata*] called Ibrahim speak of them. (Koran 21:60)

He gave the title *fata* to the one He loves because the one who bears the sign of Futuwwah and is called by its name gives all the love that he had for himself, for his family, for his property and children, to Allah. He empties his being of everything and leaves it to the Owner of All Things. He leaves the whole universe and all that there is in it. That is when Allah calls His chosen friends:

﴿إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ آمَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَاهُمْ هُدًى﴾

> Surely they were noble youths [*fityan*] who believed in their Lord, and We advanced them in guidance. (Koran 18:13)

They were given abundant guidance and climbed to His proximity because they believed in their Lord only for their Lord's sake, and said:

﴿وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَن نَّدْعُوَ مِن دُونِهِ إِلَٰهًا ۖ لَّقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذًا شَطَطًا﴾

> Our Lord is the Lord of Heaven and Earth. Never shall we call upon any god other than Him. (Koran 18:14)

Allah dressed them with His own clothes, and He took them in His high protection and turned them in the direction of His beauties and said:

﴿وَنُقَلِّبُهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ ۖ﴾

> And We turned them about to the right and to the left. (Koran 18:18)

All who enter the path of Futuwwah are under Allah's direction and protection.

[O my son], may Allah accord you His pleasure. You asked about Futuwwah. Know that Futuwwah means following the ordinances of perfect devotion, leaving all evil, and attaining in action and in thought the best of visible and hidden good conduct. Every condition and every moment demand from you one aspect of Futuwwah. There is no state or time without that demand. There is a Futuwwah fit for your behavior toward God, another toward the Prophet, and others toward his companions; yet others toward the pure ones of the past, your sheikh, your brotherhood, and the two angels on your shoulders who keep the accounting of your deeds.

2 Introduction: Definitions of Futuwwah (Spiritual Chivalry)

[A: "Futuwwa is to prefer others over one's self."]

[Z: "Futuwwa is for one to always work for the sake of others; it is also said that it is that one never sees one's self as holding any favor over another, nor possessing any rights upon another."]

Ja'far al-Sadiq was once asked, "What is Futuwwah?" He replied: "Futuwwah is not possible with quarreling and backbiting. Futuwwah is feeding people, giving to them, being pleasant and honorable to them, and not causing them difficulties."

One of the necessities of Futuwwah is to abide with the outer and inner codes of good behavior. Abul-Husayn al-Farisi reports that Abu Muhammad al-Jurayri said: "Religion possesses ten treasures – five outer and five inner. The outer treasures are to be truthful in your speech, generous with your property, and humble in your appearance, and to avoid causing difficulties to others, while bearing the difficulties caused by them. The five inner treasures of religions are to fear separation from Him, to wish to be with Him, to regret your wrongdoings, to have conscience, and to feel shame (*hayya'*) before your Lord."

The answer of Abul-Husayn al-Bushanji to a question about Futuwwah is significant. He said, "One of the principles of Futuwwah is to beautify one's essence with God: to love and want for one's friends the things that one loves and wants for oneself; in fact, to prefer one's friends to oneself, because Allah Most High says:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

'But those who, before them, had homes [in Medina] and had adopted the faith, show their affection to those who came to them for refuge, and do not entertain in their hearts desire for things given to them, but give them

preference over themselves, even though poverty was their [own lot]' [al-Hashr 59:9].

And the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said:

"لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى يحب لأخيه ما يحبَّ لنفسه"

'Your faith is not complete until you love for your brother that which you love for yourself.'"

Abul-Husayn ibn Sam'un said: "Futuwwah means opposing and arguing little, being fair; preventing errors in oneself and not criticizing the errors in others; trying to correct one's faults; accepting accusations; enduring troubles caused by others; lowering one's ego; being pleasant to both the old and the young, doing good deeds, giving good advice, and accepting advice; loving one's friends, and bearing peacefully with one's enemies. These are the visible aspects of the path that are sufficient for us to know until we are able to hear and tell about the truths of Futuwwah."

Al-Husayn ibn Ahmad heard a simple Bedouin give this definition of Futuwwah: "One on the path gives food, shows a pleasant disposition, is honorable and modest, and never causes pain to anyone."

Shah ibn Shuja' asked Abu Hafs about Futuwwah. Abu Hafs answered, "Futuwwa is morals."

Abul-Husayn al-Maliki said: "Futuwwah is superior character and behavior, and inner purity."

2.1 A central hadith delineating futuwwah

[عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: من نفَّس عن مؤمن كُربةً من كُرب الدنيا نفَّس الله عنه كُرْبَةً من كُرَبِ يوم القيامة، ومن ستر مسلماً ستره الله في الدنيا والآخرة، ومن يسَّر على معسِرٍ يسَّر الله عليه في الدنيا والآخرة، والله في عون العبد ما كان العبد في عون أخيه... " (رواه مسلم وأبو داود والترمذي والنسائي وابن ماجه، وابن حبان في صحيحه والحاكم وقال صحيح على شرطهما).

On the authority of Abu Hurayra (Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "He who relieves a believer of a sorrow from the sorrows of this world, Allah will relieve him of one of his own fears from those of the day of Judgment; he who hides the faults of a Muslim, Allah will cover his own faults in this world and in the next; he who eases matters for one in straits, Allah will ease things for him in this world and the next; Allah is in the aid of the slave, so long as the slave is in the aid of his brother. ..." (Related by Muslim, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban in his Sahih, and by al-Hakim who stated it was rigorously authentic according to the conditions of Bukhari and Muslim.)]

2.2 Perfection of futuwwah: Muhammad (Allah bless him and grant him peace)

[Q: The master Abu 'Ali ad-Daqqaq commented, "The perfection of the quality of chivalry belongs to the Messenger of Allah alone, for on the Day of Resurrection all men will say, 'Me, Me' while he (Allah bless him and grant him peace) will say 'My people, My people'."

Z: "(My people, My people) ...since occupying one's self with the welfare of others in such an awesome situation is the utmost peak of selflessness and futuwwah."]

3 Service to Others

3.1 Being in the service of others

It is important to assume the behavior of servantship. Through Husayn ibn Yahya we hear Junayd say, “To be a servant is to leave one's will, to be humble and modest.”

The fine care given to the rules of conduct befitting Allah's perfect servant should not prevent him from being concerned about and protective of the interests of the public. Dhu Nun said, “The people of wisdom have three principles: to find peace within themselves, to spread the gifts of Allah in the company of the people who remember him, and to inform men about Allah with a wise tongue.”

Receive the one who comes and do not run after the one who turns his back on you. ‘Abdul-Wahid ibn ‘Ali reports that Faris said, “In accordance with their ethics, the Sufis do not reject those who come to their door, and do not pursue those who do not come; nor do they try to dominate the ones who enter their circle.”

[Allah in service of he who is in service of his brother, Muslim and non-Muslim:

T:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله ”الله في عون العبد ما كان العبد في عون أخيه.“ (مسلم)

On the authority of Abu Hurayra (Allah be pleased with him), who said: the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: “Allah is in the assistance of a servant, so long as the servant is in the assistance of his brother.” (Related by Muslim)

Q:

عن أبي هريرة، عن زيد ابن ثابت رضي الله عنهما عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال "لا يزال الله تعالى في حاجة العبد ما دام العبد في حاجة أخيه المسلم." (رواية القشيري بسنده في رسالته. وروى مثله الطبراني عن زيد بن ثابت، وقال المنذري "رجاله ثقات").

Allah continues to fulfill the needs of a slave, so long as the slave remains fulfilling the needs of his brother Muslim." (Related by Qushayri in al-Risala)

Z: "The noun "brother" is qualified with the adjective "Muslim" due to the predominance of it usually being the actually case (that it is a muslim who is being served)."

A: "Otherwise, fulfilling the needs of a non-Muslim is likewise part of futuwwah."

The Brotherhood of humanity: Nawawi's Forty Hadiths (#13):

عن أبي حمزَةَ أنس بن مالك رضي الله عنه خادم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "لا يومن أحدكم حتى يحب لأخيه ما يحبَّ لنفسه" (بخاري ومسلم)

On the authority of Anas bin Malik, the servant of the messenger of Allah, that the Prophet said: "None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself." (Related by Bukhari and Muslim)

Nawawi: "It is fitter to interpret to interpret this hadith as referring to universal brotherhood, including both Muslims and non-Muslim, such that one loves for one's non-Muslim brother what one loves for one's self, i.e. to enter Islam, just as one loves one's Muslim brother to remain in Islam, this being why it is desirable (mustahabb) to pray for the guidance of non-Muslims." (from al-Arbaʿun al-Nawawiyya wa sharhuhu, tr. Sh. Nuh Keller in Reliance of the Traveller, p. 699)

Q: "Futuwwa means that you do not care whether the guest at your table is a saint or an unbeliever"

A: "(do not care (lit. do not distinguish)) due to the servants' annihilation (fana') in his pleasing his Lord and Master, and his working to increase His love for him. This does not, of course, negate the superiority of a saint's, or

one of the lowest of the believers', eating one's food over the same act by a non-Muslim."]

3.2 Entering joy into others' lives

[T:

عن أنس رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: من لَقي أخاه المسلمَ بما يُحِبُّ لِيَسُرَّه بذلك سرَّه الله عز وجل يومَ القيامة. (رواه الطبراني في الصغير بإسناد حسن)

On the authority of Anas (Allah be pleased with him), that the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "Whosoever meets his fellow Muslim with something that he likes in order to please him, Allah Most Exalted will please him on the Day of Resurrection." (Related by Tabarani in al-Saghir with a sound (hasan) chain)]

Share the joy of your brethren to the extent that if you are keeping a nonobligatory fast, you will break it to join the feast and festivities. Muhammad ibn ʻAbdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Quraysh reported that Nafiʻ reported that Ibn ʻAbdullah heard the Prophet say, "If a person who is fasting joins his brethren and they ask him to break his fast, he should break it."

Know happiness and joy in your relationships with your brethren. ʻAbdul-ʻAziz ibn Jaʻfar of Baghdad reports that al-Husayn ibn Zayd said to Jaʻfar ibn Muhammad, "Tell me, did our beloved Prophet ever joke?" He answered, "Allah bestowed on him the best manner of joyfulness. Allah sent other prophets who had suffering and distress, but He sent Muhammad (Allah bless him and grant him peace) for mercy and compassion. One of the signs of his kindness and love for his people was that he joked with them. He did this so they would not stay away from him out of awe. My father, Muhammad, told me that his father, ʻAli, was told by his father, al-Husayn, that he heard the Messenger of Allah say: ʻAllah hates those who make disagreeable and sad faces at their friends.'"

3.3 Relieving others' burdens

[عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: من نفَّس عن مؤمن كُربةً من كُرب الدنيا نفَّس اللهُ عنه كُرْبَةً من كُرَبِ يوم القيامة، ومن ستر مسلماً ستره الله في الدنيا والآخرة، ومن يسَّر على معسِرٍ يسَّر الله عليه في الدنيا والآخرة، والله في عون العبد ما كان العبد في عون أخيه... " (رواه مسلم وأبو داود والترمذي والنسائي وابن ماجه، وابن حبان في صحيحه والحاكم وقال صحيح على شرطهما).

On the authority of Abu Hurayra (Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "He who relieves a believer of a sorrow from the sorrows of this world, Allah will relieve him of one of his own fears from those of the day of Judgment; he who hides the faults of a Muslim, Allah will cover his own faults in this world and in the next; he who eases matters for one in straits, Allah will ease things for him in this world and the next; Allah is in the aid of the slave, so long as the slave is in the aid of his brother. ..." (Related by Muslim, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban in his Sahih, and by al-Hakim who stated it was rigorously authentic according to the conditions of Bukhari and Muslim.)]

Prefer the well-being and comfort of your brother over your own, and relieve them of all difficulties. Abul-'Abbas al-Makhrami reports that Muhammad ibn Abu Ja'far al-Haddad was on the path of resignation [*tawakkul*] for ten years. He worked hard in the marketplace, but he did not even buy a glass of water for himself, nor did he use his daily pay to go to the public baths. He distributed it all to the poor people of Shunziyyah and other places. When night came, he went from door to door, gathering crumbs of bread with which to break his fast.

[Q e220: "It is said that there was once a pilgrim who spent the night in Medina. He thought his satchel was stolen. He saw Ja'far al-Sadiq and grabbed him, demanding, "Are you the thief who stole my satchel?" Ja'far asked, "What was in it?" The man replied, "One thousand dinars!" Ja'far took him into his house and weighed out one thousand dinars for him. The man returned to where he was lodging, went into his room, and saw his satchel that he thought had been stolen. He went to Ja'far to apologize, and return the money to him. But Ja'far refused to take back the money, saying, "I never

reclaim something I have given away." The man asked someone, "Who is that man?" He answered, "Ja'far al-Sadiq."]

3.4 Giving others the smallest of their rights, without demanding one's own

[Qushayri] Muhasibi "Chivalry requires that you be just with others and that you do not demand justice from them."

3.5 Showing compassion and patience with others

Show compassion both to the ones who obey and the ones who rebel. Muhammad ibn ʻAbdullah ibn Shadhan reports this story of Ibrahim al-Atrush: "We were sitting on the shores of the Tigris River with Maʻruf al-Karkhi. A boat full of young people drinking and playing tambourines was passing by. One of the dervishes said, 'O Abu Mahfuz, do you see the ones who revolt against their Lord in that boat? Pray to Allah that they be cursed!'

Maʻruf lifted his hands to heaven and prayed in this fashion: 'O Allah, my Lord, I beg you to make these people as joyful in heaven as you have made them joyful in this world.'

'But we asked you to curse them!' said one of his people.

Maʻruf answered, 'My brothers, if God accords them joy in heaven, it will be because He has accepted their repentance.'"

Compassion must be the basis of your relationships in Futuwwah. Junayd was asked about compassion toward others. He answered, "Give them what they want, do not ask them to do something that is beyond their capacity, and do not tell them things that they will not understand." Someone was asked the extent of his compassion towards his brothers. He answered, "If a fly were to sit on my brother's face, I would feel it on my own face," and he recited this couplet:

> I am jealous of the earth upon which you walk,
> O, I wish instead that you would walk on my face so long as I live.

One is especially expected to accept, endure, and respond to the needs and wants of others. ʻAbdul-Wahid ibn Ahmad al-Hashimi recites the following poem of Ibn Durayd:

> Do not be bothered by people who want something from you,

Happy is the one from whom people want;
Do not send away empty-handed the one who asks from you,
For lasting honor belongs to him who is the source of hope.

3.6 Preferring others to one's self

Be compassionate, and prefer the interest of your brethren to your own egotism. According to the report of Muhammad ibn Hasan, Abu Ja'far al-Isfahani, who was Abu Turab's dervish, told this story: Abu Turab went to Mecca for the Pilgrimage. A man from Khurasan came to him. He had ten thousand dirhams in his possession. He opened the bag and said, "O Abu Turab, take this."

Abu Turab replied, "Pour it out."

The man from Khurasan poured the money onto the ground in front of Abu Turab. Abu Turab took two dirhams, gave them to one of his dervishes, and asked him to go and buy a shirt. Then he tore the shirt into shreds, making little bags out of them, and put handfuls of money in each. He then sent them to poor people, thus avoiding the embarrassment that would be caused by their having to come and ask for it.

When the money was almost distributed, a man reminded him that his own dervishes had not eaten anything for many days. Abu Turab took a handful of dirhams, gave it to him, and said, "Take this and feed them."

Then a woman approached. "O Abu Turab," she said, "what about your own family?"

Turning to his dervishes, Abu Turab said, "See if there is anything left." They searched on the ground, found two dirhams, and gave them to her.

Show compassion to all Creation. Nasr ibn Muhammad reports that Junayd related that there was a sheikh in Damascus called Abu Musa al-Qumasi who was a man of Futuwwah; everyone praised him. One day, the sheikh's house collapsed on top of him and his wife. When people began to dig the ruins, they found his wife first. "Leave me," she said. "Go and try to find the sheikh and save him. He was sitting in a corner over there." They left the woman, dug where she pointed, and found the sheikh. "Leave me," he said. "Go and save my wife." Each wanted the other to be saved. That is the state of those who are together for the sake of Allah and who are friends and brothers in the name of Allah. They are in that compassionate state at all times.

Leave all your preoccupation with yourself, with your own interests and needs, and take care of the dependents Allah has bestowed upon you. It is related that ʻAbdallah ibn ʻUmar forgot his own hunger but fed his slaves, and neglected his own clothes but dressed his servants well. In every way he preferred their needs to his own. He used to say that doing this was easier for him, and that it was protection against the terrors of his ego.

3.7 Serving and treating everyone equally

Thus you should show graciousness to the needy and shy away from the rich and powerful. Al-Aʻmash reports that Abraham (Allah grant him peace) used to show joy at the coming of poor guest, and serve them with pleasure. But when rich and noble guests came to his house, he would serve them with shyness.

In service and benevolence, you should not choose one over another, and you should not discriminate. ʻAbdullah ibn Muhammad al-Razi says, "Humility is serving indiscriminately."

Do not give more to one and less to another. Give to everyone, and belittle what you give, putting greater importance on what others do. Abu ʻUthman Saʻid ibn Abu Saʻid reports the following incident from Jaʻfar ibn Muhammad al-Khuldi. Abu Bakr al-Qazzaz, an Egyptian, was a good man, and many Sufis visited him. Members of other orders and other people often came to his house also. He treated them all equally. Once he was asked why he was so indiscriminate. He answered, "I am not one of those honored men who know the inner worth of people and can tell them apart. I fear that I might make a mistake, and I am even more afraid to lose what I hope for."

Help and give to all without discrimination. Abul-Hasan ibn Muqsim declared in Baghdad that al-Mada'ini told that the last advice of Yahya ibn Khalid al-Barmaki to his son was to be generous to mankind always, because giving to others is give to oneself.

3.8 Serving without being asked

You must give without being asked. Anything given after being asked for is merely reparation for the embarrassment suffered by the asker. The generous should not cause embarrassment to others. Abu ʻAbdullah ibn Battah tells of the advice that ʻUbaydullah ibn ʻAbbas gave to his brother's son. "The best

of gifts is one given without being asked, because if you are asked, what you give is only payment for the supplicant's embarrassment."

You must also serve without being asked. Sufyan al-Thawri said, "It is contrary to Allah's noble ethics not to serve when you are able to serve." Al-Ma'mun said to al-Fadl ibn al-Rabi': "Consider it a happy occasion when you are able to provide help to someone in need, because you do not know what the next moment will bring; destinies may change and life may be so short that you may not complete an act nor see a joy mature."

4 Graciousness, Generosity, & Hospitality

4.1 Generosity

[N #547:

وعن جابر رضي الله عنه قال: ما سئل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم شيئاً قطُّ فقال: لا. (متفق عليه)

On the authority of Jabir (Allah be pleased with him), who said: Never – not even once – was the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) asked for something, to which he replied: No. (Agreed upon)]

Give all that you can and do not fall into the affliction of miserliness. The Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) asked a man, "Who is your master?" He answered, "Al-Judd ibn Qays is my master, but he is a little stingy." The Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Is there a worse sickness than miserliness?"

We hear through Abul-'Abbas al-Baghdadi that Ahmad ibn Masruq related that he was with Abu Nasr one day on the streets of Baghdad. All Abu Nasr possessed was a wrapper around his waist that was worth eight dinars. They were accosted by a beggar who asked alms for the sake of Muhammad (Allah bless him and grant him peace). Without a second thought, Abu Nasr took off his wrapper, folded it in two, tore off half, and gave it to the beggar. He took a couple of steps and then said, "My miserliness is despicable." He returned and gave the other half to the poor man.

Above all, be generous. Through Abul-Husayn ibn Sabih we find that 'A'isha heard the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) say: "Paradise is the home of the generous."

Understand that what you really own is not what you keep of your property, but that which you spend for your brethren. It is reported through 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali and 'Amr ibn Shurahbil that 'A'isha recounted that someone presented a lamb as a gift to the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace). He distributed the meat. 'A'isha said, "Only the neck is left for us." The Prophet said, "No, all of it is left for us except the neck."

4.2 Being gracious to guests

[Al-Hashr 59:9

﴿وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

"But those who, before them, had homes (in Medina) and had adopted the Faith, show their affection to such as came to them for refuge, and entertain no desire in their hearts for things given to the (latter), but give them preference over themselves, even though poverty was their (own lot). And those saved from the covetousness of their own souls; they are the ones that achieve prosperity. "]

[N #564:

وعن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: جاء رجل إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: إنّي مجهود، فأرسل إلى بعض نسائه، فقالت: والَّذي بعثك بالحق ماعندي إلا ماء، ثم أرسل إلى أخرى، فقالت مثل ذلك، حتى قلنَ كلهن مثل ذلك: لا والذي بعثك بالحق ما عندي إلا ماء. فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم "من يُضِيفُ هذا الليلةَ" فقال رجل من الأنصار: أنا يا رسول الله، فانطلق به إلى رَحله، فقال لامرأته، أكرمي ضيفَ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

وفي رواية قال لامرأته: هل عندك شيء؟ فقالت: لا، إلا قوتَ صبياني. قال: علِّليهم بشيء وإذا أرادوا العشاء، فنَوِّمهم، وإذا دخل ضيفُنا، فأطفئي السِّراج، وأريه أنَّا نأكل، فقعدوا وأكل الضيفُ وباتا طاويَين، فلمَّا أصبح، غدا على النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: "لقد عجِب الله من صنيعكُما بضيفِكما الليلة" (متفق عليه)

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: A man came to the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and said; "I am hard pressed

by hunger." He (Allah bless him and grant him peace) sent a word to one of his wives who replied: "By Him Who has sent you with the Truth, I have nothing except water." Then he sent the same message to another (wife) and received the same reply. He sent this message to all of them (i.e., his wives) and received the same reply. Then he (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Who will entertain this (man) as guest?" One of the Ansar said: "O Messenger of Allah, I will." So he took him home and said to his wife: "Serve the guest of Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace)."

Another narration is: The Ansari asked his wife: "Have you got anything?" She answered: "Nothing, except a little food for the children." He said: "Keep them busy with something, and when they ask for food put them to sleep. When the guest enters, extinguish the light and give him the impression that we are also eating." So they sat down and the guest ate and they passed the night hungry. When he came to the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) in the morning, he said to him, "Allah admired what you did with your guest last night." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

T 3/369: One narration adds: “Then the verse:

﴿وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ﴾

“but (they)give them preference over themselves” (al-Hashr 59:9)

was revealed. (Related by Muslim, and others).]

When elders or those who have a higher spiritual rank invite a young novice, they must serve him with pleasure and love. Hafiz ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn reports that Yahya ibn Aktham said that he was once invited by the caliph al-Ma'mun. He became thirsty in the middle of the night and got up to fetch water. He heard the caliph say, “Why are you not asleep, O Yahya?” he answered, “I was awakened by thirst, O Commander of the Faithful.” The caliph ordered him to return to bed, and personally brought a glass of water to him, saying, “Do you now know that for a host to ask his guest to help is not good behavior?” He then added that the brother of Caliph Harun al-Rashid related that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) had said: “To make one's guest serve is a cause for shame.”

The host should serve everything he has to his brother. Even if he has only a drop of water left, he should serve that. If he does not offer what is possible for him to offer, his day and night are under the curse of Allah.

[T: Ibrahim b. Nashit relates that he once entered upon ʻAbdallah b. al-Harith b. Jaz' al-Zabidi (Allah be pleased with him), upon which the latter threw him a cushion which he had been reclining on, saying: “Whoever doesn't honor his guest is not of Ahmad, nor is he of Abraham, may Allah's peace be upon them both.” (Related by Tabarani, the narrative stopping at the Follower (tabiʻi); its narrators are all trustworthy)]

4.3 Hospitality, and holding feasts

Give elaborate feasts, be gracious when entertaining, and be generous to your guests. Through Muhammad ibn al-Fadl ibn Ishaq and Abu Hurayra (Allah be pleased with them both) we hear that the Messenger of Allah said, “Whoever believes in Allah and the Day of Last Judgment, let him be gracious to his guests.”

[Q e216: "Chivalry means that, if you invite ten guests, you would not be affected if nine or eleven were to come instead."]

[N #565:

عن أبي هريرة قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم "طعامُ الاثنين كافي الثلاثة، وطعام الثلاثة كافي الأربعة" (متفق عليه)

وفي رواية لمسلم عن جابر رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "طعام الواحد يكفي الاثنين، وطعام الاثنين يكفي الأربعة، وطعام الأربعة يكفي الثمانية". (متفق عليه)

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "The food for two suffices for three; and the food for three suffices for four persons." (Agreed upon)

In Muslim, Jabir (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "The food for one person suffices for two; the food for two suffices for four, and the food of four suffices for eight persons." (Muslim)]

Invite guests, offer feasts, and be hospitable. Through Muhammad ibn Quraysh, we hear that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “How awful is a society that does not accept guests.” And we hear through Muhammad ibn ʻAbdullah that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that there is no good in the one who does not welcome guests.

During these gatherings, begin your own meal only after everyone else has started eating. Muhammad ibn Yaʻqub al-Asamm reports that the father of Jaʻfar ibn Muhammad said, “Whenever the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) ate with others, he was the last one to begin eating.”

4.4 Not being stingy with your money, time or reputation

[Q e216: "Chivalry means that you do not turn away when a man in need draws near to you"; "Chivalry means that you do not hide from those who seek you."]

Just as you distribute your property freely, so should you give away your rank and position.

5 Respect, Overlooking Faults, and Friendship

5.1 Respecting others

Treat people as you wish to be treated. As the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “As you wish people to come to you, go to them.”

A man came to Ibn Yazdaniyar and said, “Give me some advice.” Ibn Yazdaniyar said, “Judge others as you wish to be judged.”

Abu ‘Uthman said, “Whoever has self-respect shows respect to others, and whoever does not have self-respect has no respect for others.”

Respect your friends and show your respect for them. We hear through Isma‘il ‘Abdullah al-Mikali that Wathilah ibn al-Khattab al-Qurashi said that a man entered the mosque when the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) was alone. The Prophet got up to show him respect. When the man protested, the Prophet responded that to be paid respect is the right of the believer.

Respect others and be impressed only by the best in them. Junayd's dervishes complained to him about some people who kept asking him pointless questions. They requested him not to answer such people anymore. Junayd replied, “I do not see in them what you see in them. I hope that they will perchance fall on a word that they will understand and that one word will save them.”

5.2 Overlooking and hiding the faults of others, expansiveness of heart, and magnanimity

[عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ومن ستر مسلماً ستره الله في الدنيا والآخرة... “ (رواه مسلم)

On the authority of Abu Hurayra (Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: “He who hides the faults of a Muslim, Allah will cover his own faults in this world and in the next...” (Related by Muslim)]

In your relationships, if you should encounter an insolent person, show understanding and forbearance; and if you should meet someone who does you harm, respond with forgiveness. Abu Bakr al-Mufid reports that the father of Muhammad ibn ʻIsa al-Mufid reports that the father of Muhammad ibn ʻIsa al-Qurayshi heard a man advising his son in this manner: "Be gentle with those who are harsh to you; forgive those who cause harm to you. Always leave room for peace and harmony, so that your friends will come even closer to you and your enemies will be ashamed of what they did to you."

Respond to cruelty with kindness, and do not punish for an error. Abul-Ahwas relates that "Abu al-Ahwas's father asked the Messenger of Allah whether, if he were to go to a close friend and the man would not help him, he should do the same to the friend if he asked for help. The Messenger of Allah said no."

In generosity and benevolence, follow the example of Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), who said: "Visit those who do not visit you, give to those who do not give to you, respond with kindness and good deeds to the harm that is done to you."

Forgive, even though you may have the power to retaliate. Sari says, "Whoever forgives while he has the power to take revenge is forgiven in his turn by Allah when he deserves punishment."

Be lenient with your friends, do not be cross with them, and do not talk harshly to them. Muhammad ibn Bashir tells of a quarrel between Ibn Sammak and a friend of his. At the end of the discussion, the friend said, "Let us meet tomorrow and continue this argument." Ibn Sammak answered, "No, let us meet tomorrow and forgive each other."

Abu ʻAbdullah Muhammad ibn al-ʻAbbas al-ʻUsmi relates this advice of Ibrahim ibn Shaklah: "Once you have become brothers with someone on this path, do not complain anymore of his actions, whether they are right or wrong, good or bad, whether your brother is selfish or a spendthrift who throws everything away. When he is grabbing, be thankful. When he is a spendthrift and wastes things, be patient. Whether he is good or bad, give him his due. The right word at the right time helps love to endure." It is also said that, at times, "to openly reprimand is better than keeping a grudge."

Sari al-Saqati said that man's peace depends of five principles, [one of which] was refraining from blaming or finding fault with people even to the extent of ignoring their rebellion against Allah.

[Q: "Know that among the requirements of chivalry is to conceal the faults of friends, especially their misfortunes in which their enemies would take delight. I heard Abu ʻAbd al-Rahman al-Sulami tell al-Nasarabadhi many times, " ʻAli, the singer, drinks by night and attends your gathering by day." Al-Nasrabadhi paid no attention to this until it happened that one day he was walking in the company of one who had mentioned to him ʻAli's shortcoming. They found ʻAli flying face down, clearly drunk. Al-Nasrabadhi started to wash his mouth. The man accompanying him asked, "How often have we said something about this to the sheikh without his listening? Here is ʻAli in the very condition we described!" Al-Nasrabadhi look at him and the one rebuking ʻAli, "Carry him on your shoulder and take him to his hourse." He found himself obliged to comply.]

Wish for the conditions that Sari al-Saqati enumerates. Through Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Khalidi we learn that Sari said that man's peace depends of five principles avoid associating with evil people, be distant from ordinary people, and in this distance taste the taste of your own actions; at the same time, refrain from blaming or finding fault with people even to the extent of ignoring their rebellion against Allah. There are also five faults from which one should cleanse oneself: hypocrisy, argument, affectation, artificiality, and love of property and rank; and five curses from which one should free oneself: miserliness, ambition, anger, greed and gluttony.

5.3 Whom one should befriend

ʻUthman ibn Hakim said: "In religious associations, befriend those who are superior to you, and in worldly associations, befriend those who are inferior to you. Associating spiritually with people who are inferior to you will weaken your discipline and obedience to Allah. Associating in worldly affairs with people who are less fortunate than you will magnify Allah's gifts to you and strengthen your thankfulness."

Dawud al-Ta'i said, "Befriend the believers, because they, of all the people of this world, will give you the least trouble and the most help."

Let there be familiarity and closeness among brethren. Through Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ya'qub al-Hajjaji, we learn that the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "the believer is the one with whom one can be close. The one who is not close and the one to whom one cannot be close are of no use. The good among men are those from whom others profit."

Behave toward your friends in a way that will prevent them from doing something for which they would have to apologize. 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Damghani reports that Yahya ibn Mu'adh al-Razi said, "He who forces upon you a condition that necessitates apologies is not a friend. Neither is he a friend who does not offer you something before you ask for it."

Know the value of your friends, and in their company forget all the good deeds you did for them. It is repeated by Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz that Abul-Qasim Ishaq ibn Muhammad said: "When I left Abu Bakr al-Warraq, I asked him to tell me with whom I should associate. He answered, 'With those who forget the favors they have done for you. Beware of those who remember the help they have given you, and remind you of it when they meet you. Also beware of those who value according to their needs, which they expect you to satisfy.'"

To lower one's state by making demands upon other people is ugly. Abul-Husayn al-Farisi relates that Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Dawud al-Balkhi said: "The love of someone who does not cause difficulties is of long duration. To have a relationship with a friend who is shy and timid is pleasurable; but friends who have continuous needs and demands are unbearable."

5.4 Loyalty to friends and neighbors, and caring for their interests

Do not lend your ears to slander against your friends.

Keep your friends' interest at heart, and care for your neighbors. We learn through Ibrahim ibn Muhammad ibn Yahya that Ibn 'Abbas (Allah be

pleased with them both) brought a gift to Ibn al-Zubayr, who said: “Someone who eats while his next-door neighbor is hungry is not a believer.”

Do not lend your ears to slander against your friends.

To protect your neighbor's rights is a good deed. It is related that the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: “Gabriel told me that I owe so much to my neighbor that one would think that he was destined to become my heir.” Abu ‘Abdullah ibn Battah reports that al-Hasan al-Basri said, “The correct neighborly behavior is not to be a weight upon your neighbor, but to tolerate it when he torments you.”

If you love someone, love unconditionally, and beware of being disloyal. Abul-Mufaddal al-Shaybani reports this saying from Sufyan ibn ‘Uyaynah: “The path of Futuwwah is called a brotherhood because it is composed of those who avoid disloyalty at all costs; and its members are called faithful because they are loyal to their love for each other.”

5.5 Love your friends, and accept whatever they ask of you

Go along with friends and do not go against their wishes. Al-Musayyab ibn Wadih said, “If I tell one of my brethren, ‘Get up, let's go,’ and get the answer ‘Where to?’, I know that he is not my brother.”

Nothing in this world is worth discord between brothers. Mansur ibn ‘Abdullah reports Muhammad ibn Suqah's account of two men who became brothers in religion. One of the men asked the other to give him something; the second man denied him, but the petitioner did not seem to mind. “My brother,” said the second man, “you asked me for something and I did not do it. Why did you not care?”

“I have become your brother, and grew to love you long before I asked this favor,” answered the other man. “As long as my reason for loving you does not change, my attitude will not change, whether or not you give me what I asked for.”

The other man replied, “I refused what you asked for only to try you. Now you can take whatever you wish from me. You have the same right as I do to what I own.”

Get along with friends and help them. Through Isma‘il ibn Ahmad al-Khallali we hear that Abu Sa‘id al-Khudri (Allah be pleased with him) said:

"A man prepared a feast for the Messenger of Allah and his companions. When the food was brought to them, one declined to eat, saying that he was fasting. The Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: 'Your brother has invited you; he went to a lot of trouble for you. Eat now. You may make up your fast later.'"

Be among the lovers who obey with pleasure all the wishes of the beloved. Abul-Husayn al-Maliki recounts that Nuri came to Junayd and said, "I hear that you give discourses on every subject. Speak to me on whichever subject you choose, so that I may add things that you do not know."

Junayd said, "What do you wish me to talk about?"

Nuri replied, "Love."

Junayd said, "Let me tell you a story. My friends and I were in a garden. One of us was supposed to bring our meal, but he was late. We went up on a terrace to look out for him. We saw approaching us on the path a blind man accompanied by a youth with a beautiful countenance. We heard the blind man say to the younger one, 'You ordered me to do "this." I did it. You prevented me from doing "that," and I did not do it. I have never acted against your wishes. What else do you want from me?' The young man said, 'I wish you to die.' 'Very well, I will die,' replied the blind man. He lay down and covered his face. I said to my friends, 'That blind man indeed looks lifeless, but he could not really have died; he must be pretending.' We came down, we looked at the man, we shook him and saw that he was indeed dead.'"

Nuri left without adding a word.

5.6 Maintaining old relationships, and remain loyal even when separated from your friends by time or space

Maintain old relationships. In a Hadith that comes to us through Muhammad ibn Mahmud al-Maruzi al-Faqih, 'A'isha said that she heard the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) say: "Allah approves the keeping of old friendships."

The followers of the path are advised to keep old affections and relations. The Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) says that Allah likes old friendships. Abu Bakr al-Razi reports that Abu Muhammad al-Maghazili said, "One who wants to continue to receive love and care should be faithful to his old affections and relationships."

Whether a friend is with you or away from you, continue loving him.

Show continuous love and understanding, and never leave your friends because of the inconvenience that they may cause. Sheikh Abu Sahl Muhammad ibn Sulayman reports that Ahmad ibn Yahya recited this poem:

> A friend who meets you with a sour face
> And finds other friends when you leave is not a friend,
> A friend is he who is ever united with me
> And keeps my secrets from everyone.

Abul-Fath al-Qawwas al-Zahid said in Baghdad, "One who changes friends for no reason must have shown love only for profit."

Be very patient with your brethren, and do not change friends because of impatience. The Prophet David told his son, the Prophet Solomon: "Do not exchange an old and tested friendship for a new one. If you do, you will be changing one gift from Allah for another. Know that a thousand friends are too few, and even a single enemy is too many."

5.7 Visiting and keeping the company of the righteous

You should have little association and a great deal of patience with ordinary people, and be satisfied with the absolute minimum. ʻAbdullah ibn Muhammad reports that Yahya ibn Muʻadh said: "If you should feel the absolute need to associate with people, you should keep company with believers, talk with them, befriend them, and try to learn their state so that you can also be with them in the hereafter."

By loving the ones whom Allah loves, you attract His love to yourself. We hear through ʻAbdul-Wahid ibn Bakr al-Warthani and Qannad Abu Musa al-Dabili that Abu Yazid al-Bistami said that a man asked him, "Show me the shortest way to Allah Most High." Abu Yazid said, "Love those beloved of Allah and make yourself lovable to them so that they love you, because Allah looks into the hearts of those whom He loves seventy times a day. Perchance He will find your name in the heart of the one He loves; then He will love you, too, and He will forgive you your wrongdoings."

Relations between brethren must be such that when they see each other, their hearts should fill with joy. Ismaʻil ibn Abu ʻUmayyah said: "It should be easy

to go and see a friend among the brethren, and one should not hesitate to do so. Be wise, see how important it is, and consider it a blessing and gift."

Ibn Mubarak said, "To see one's brethren strengthens one's faith, and is a cure for illness."

Sufyan al-Thawri declared that he had no other pleasure left in this world except to be with friends.

5.8 No burdens or formalities (takalluf) between friends

True hospitality and mutual respect are expressed in the following tale told by Abu Muhammad al-Jurayri: "Sheikh Ibn Masruq had invited us to his house. Along the way we encountered a friend and told him that we were invited to the sheikh's house but that we did not exactly know the way, and we asked him to take us there. He said, 'I was not invited; the sheikh might see me approaching his house with you.' Nevertheless he agreed to lead us so as not to oppose our wish. When we came to the sheikh's door, our friend stayed away. We told our host what had happened. The sheikh said, 'I thought that my place in his heart was such that he would feel free to come to my house without invitation. If I have offended him, he must step on my cheek.' We tried to convince the sheikh that it was not necessary, but he had made an oath. So we laid a clear cloth on the floor, and the sheikh placed the side of his face there. We lifted our friend by the arms so that his feet lightly touched the sheikh's face. Then he was made to sit in the sheikh's place."

Familiarity with friends visited or visiting must be understood. 'Abdullah ibn 'Ali al-Sarraj records Bishr ibn al-Harith as saying: "Among brethren, to leave the formality of good manners is good manners. He who is not familiar with his friends in activities permissible by Allah will bore them."

A follower of Futuwwa may go to a close friend's house without invitation. 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Ziyad reports that Abu Hurayra said: "One day when Abu Bakr and 'Umar were together, the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) came and asked, 'What are you doing here?' They answered, 'We swear by the One Who sent you as a true prophet that what brought us here is hunger.' Upon that, the Prophet said, 'Go to the house of such-and-such a man among those who have invited us to this city.'"

5.9 Sharing of wealth and property

Permit your friends to claim your possessions as if they belonged to them. Through Muhammad ibn ʻAbdullah ibn Zakariyya we learn that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to use the property of Abu Bakr as if it were his own.

5.10 Not making financial profit off of friends

[Q: One of our friends (may Allah grant him mercy) declared, "There is not place in chivalry for taking profit from one's friend." He was a young chivalrous man named Ahmad b. Sahl, the merchant, and I bought a linen cloak from him. He charged me only what he had paid for it, so I asked him, "Will you not take some profit?" He responded, "As for the price of the cloak, I will take it from you, and not impose an obligation on you. But I will not take a profit because there is no place in chivalry for taking profit from one's friend."]

5.11 Loyalty towards one's spiritual guide

The novice must accept the words of his master even if he does not understand them, until the blessing of these words raises him to the level of understanding. On this matter, Junayd says, "I sat in the presence of sheikhs for ten years. They would talk about the wisdom of Sufism. I never understood what they discussed, but I never raised objections to their words. Every Friday I listened to their discourses. Although I did not understand a thing they said, I felt that it was true, and I prevented myself from falling into the cursed state of denial. After ten years has passed, they came to me one day and said, 'There is such-and-such a problem; if you have heard anything pertaining to a similar situation, tell us.'"

6 The Honor Code of Chivalry

6.1 Working hard, and never being idle; take advantage of the present moment

Do not be idle, but work in this world until you reach the definite state of trust in Allah. As reported through Abu Bakr al-Razi and Abu ʻUthman al-Adami, Ibrahim al-Khawwas said, "It is not right for a Sufi not to work and earn his livelihood unless his situation makes it unnecessary, or he is clearly ordered to abandon worldly work. But if he needs to work and there is no reason for him not to work, he must work. Withdrawing from work is for those who have attained a spiritual level at which they are freed from the necessity of possessions and the following of custom."

[T:

عن أنس أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم كان يقول: "اللهم إني أعوذ بك من البخل، والكسل، وأرذل العمر، وعذاب القبر، وفتنة المحيا والممات." (رواه مسلم وغيره)

On the authority of Anas, that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to recite "O my Lord, I take refuge in you from stinginess, and laziness, and the worst of aging, and the torment of the grave, and the sedition of life and death."]

Be aware of your states, count each breath and every moment of time allotted to you, and do not waste it. Sahl ibn ʻAbdullah al-Tustari said, "Your time is the most valuable thing you have. Give every moment its due."

One must understand the element of time and give importance only to time in time: that is, give immediate attention to time in the present, before it becomes the past. Sahl ibn ʻAbdullah al-Tustari was asked, "When is the dervish saved from his ego?" He answered, "When he will not allow his ego to concern itself with any other time but the moment within which he is. That is when the Sufi will find peace."

Do not occupy the present with the preoccupations of the past and the future. ʻAbdullah ibn Yahya reports that Yahya ibn Muʻadh said, "To worry about the affairs of the past and to be preoccupied with the affairs of the future takes the blessing out of life."

When you begin a worthy task, complete the good deed and do not leave it half done. Sa'id al-Madani read this poem by Abul-Hasan ibn Abu Balgh:

> When you start a good deed, it becomes an obligation to complete it.
> A kindness promised has to be given.
> Remember my need, these thankful hands will stay with you forever.
> Stretch your hands, offer the thing that is good for me.
> Helping hands are bejeweled necklaces.

Know the value of time and how to act and behave in the present. Abul-Husayn al-Farisi reports that Junayd said, "The best deeds are done when a man knows the value of time. When he keeps his attention only on the demands of present situations, he prevents himself from overstepping the boundaries that Allah has assigned him; this also prevents him from following anyone but his Lord."

6.2 Recognizing that all sustenance (rizq) is from Allah alone, renouncing desires (zuhd), and resigning & trusting one's matter to Him alone (tawakkul)

Have faith that your sustenance is guaranteed by Allah. Sahl ibn 'Abdullah says, "The one who is still concerned about his sustenance after the guarantee has been given to him by Allah, has no value for Allah."

Do not be attached to worldly things. 'Ali ibn 'Abdullah al-Basri reports that Faris ibn 'Abdullah knew an old servant of Sahl. When she became ill, they proposed to have her cured. She refused. "Even if I knew that I would become totally cured by just having someone touch my ear," she said, "I would not let him do it. Where we are going is to out Lord; what a beautiful voyage it is!"

Seek good health, pray for it, and be thankful for it. Hazrat 'A'isha asked the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace), "O Messenger of Allah, if I find the Night of Power [when prayers are most accepted], what should I ask from my Lord?" His reply was, "Ask for forgiveness and health in this world and the hereafter."

When trouble and suffering come upon you, accept them and do not complain. 'Abdul-Wahid ibn Bakr reports that Muhammad ibn Mahbub said; "I was wandering in the streets of Baghdad. I passes through an insane

asylum, where I saw a beautiful young man with shackles on his ankles and around his neck. I was so pained at this sight that I turned away from him. He called after me by name: 'O Ibn Mahbub, your Lord has put these shackles around my neck and on my feet because I love him so. Is He not satisfied yet? Tell Him that if He is pleased, I do not mind this state of mine.'

Leave all your wants and desires in order to protect yourself from disasters. Al-Husayn ibn Yahya reports from Abu Turab al-Nakhshabi that "the avoidance of disasters depends on one's not responding to the desires of one's ego."

Trust only in Allah in order to be satisfied with what you have. Abul-Husayn al-Farisi reports from Abu Muhammad al-Jurayri that Junayd said: "Allah has taken it upon Himself to satisfy the needs of His Creation and to provide for its sustenance. That is why men of Allah have found peace in trusting Him, and in not wishing or accepting anything other than what He gives. The pure in heart who have attained union with Truth, after having achieved this trust in their Guide which abolishes doubts from their hearts, must not ask things from others, for to do so is a very ugly act."

Trust your Lord and hope only from Him. Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah relates that someone asked Abu Hazim about the extent of his fortune. He answered, "I possess only two things: One is my trust in God, that I ask only of Him; the other is my lack of desire for what is in the hands of other people."

6.3 Self-sufficiency ('iffa): Not asking of others

[N #539:

عن أبي عبد الله الزبير بن العوَّام رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "لأن يأخذ أحدكم أحبُلَهُ ثُمَّ يأتي الجبل، فيأتي بحُزمَةٍ من حطبٍ على ظهره فيَبِيعَها، فَيكُفَّ الله بها وَجهَه، خيرٌ له من أن يسأل الناس، أَعْطُوهُ أو مَنعُوه." (رواه البخاري)

Zubair bin `Awwam (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "It is far better for you to take your rope, go to the mountain, (cut some firewood) carry it on your back, and sell it and thereby save your face than begging from people whether they give you or refuse." (Bukhari)]

Trust in Allah and seek help only from Him and not from the people whom He has created. Nasr ibn Muhammad reports that Yahya ibn Mu'adh al-Razi said: "Four qualities characterize those who are close to Allah: They trust in Him in all matters, they ask only from Him, they seek only His help, and they keep only Him in their hearts, to the exclusion of everything else."

To be good is to empty and cleanse your essence of the universe and all it contains. Abul-'Abbas ibn 'Ata' says: "He who does not separate his spirit from the world, does not empty his soul of the people, and cannot remove his essence from the veils of his ego, cannot be one with his Lord. But he who can free his spirit from everything but Allah will receive many gifts, and he will know the difference between those who receive pleasure and blessings from their Lord and those who receive His wrath."

[Q: Chivalry means being generous with whatever you have been given, and concealing your hardships.]

﴿لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُم بِسِيمَاهُمْ لَا يَسْأَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِلْحَافًا وَمَا تُنفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ﴾

> "(Charity is) for those in need, who, in Allah's cause are restricted (from travel), and cannot move about in the land, seeking (for trade or work): the ignorant man thinks, because of their modesty, that they are free from want. Thou shalt know them by their (unfailing) mark: they beg not importunately from all and sundry, and whatever of good ye give, be assured Allah knoweth it well." (Baqara 2:273)]

It is detestable to fawn over and flatter someone in order to gain favor. 'Abdul-Wahid ibn Bakr reports that Abu 'Abdullah al-Qurashi said, "The one who flatters his own or someone else's ego will never smell the perfume of sincerity."

Free yourself from everything with which you find yourself surrounded, even from the whole universe, so that you may become a true servant of Allah. 'Abdul-Wahid ibn Bakr reports that Ahmad ibn Hanbal said that he saw a

letter written by Ibn al-Sammak to his brother. It said, "If you can, try to avoid being a slave to anyone but Allah, keep yourself free from submitting to worldly things, and be a servant to Allah alone."

The one on the path of Futuwwah, if he is well-to-do, should never for any reason take advantage of a poor person's services. Mansur ibn ʻAbdullah al-Khawwas told a congregation how Junayd and his followers were once in a state of need. A well-to-do friend came upon them and saw on their faces the signs of hunger. The rich man asked on of the poorer dervishes to go with him to the market. He bought food, but made the poor dervish carry it. When they approached the mosque where Junayd and his brethren were waiting, Junayd called to them, "Throw away what is in your hands." None of them ate the food. Then the man who had bought the food was told, "How important the world but have become for you, that you make a poor man a porter for your sustenance!"

Know that the One who gives and the One who takes is Allah, so do not abase yourself by asking things from others. Mansur ibn ʻAbdullah al-Harawi recited from a poem by Ibn al-Rumi:

> I see no one who can grant what Allah has not given,
> And no one who can stop the granting of what He gave.
> Generosity, tolerance, and the giving of gifts belong to the Forgiving One,
> So ask from Him alone.

In your relationships with people, do not bow in front of men for the benefits of this world, and do not lower yourself by being condescending. Referring to this, Muʻawiyah ibn Abu Sufyan said: "The one who comes to you with a bowed head to ask for something, comes to you selling Allah's blessing bestowed upon him, and loses his dignity for the sake of your power."

To lower one's state by making demands upon other people is ugly. Abul-Husayn al-Farisi relates that Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Dawud al-Balkhi said: "The love of someone who does not cause difficulties is of long duration. To have a relationship with a friend who is shy and timid is pleasurable; but friends who have continuous needs and demands are unbearable."

6.4 Modesty, hiding one's actions and states, perceiving them as being incomplete, and not seeing oneself as superior to others due to one's actions

Humility is one of the requirements of Futuwwah. To be humble is to accept the Truth and to be noble. Abul-'Abbas Muhammad reports that Ja'far ibn Harun related that Fudayl was asked about humbleness. He said that humbleness was to submit to Truth, to be led to it, and to accept it from whomever one hears it from. When asked about Futuwwah, Fudayl said that one should be noble in dealing with people.

To be modest and not show pride toward your brothers are requirements of Futwwah. 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Qazwini reports that Abul-Husayn al-Maliki said that a wise man remarked that pride only results in others looking down upon one and fining one unbearable.

Do not speak harshly to anyone. Abul-Qasim Ja'far ibn Ahmad al-Razi said his brother Abu 'Abdullah saw Bunnan al-Hammal go to an effeminate man and urge him to behave rightly. The man told him, "Get away from me, and mind what you have." Bunnan said, "What do I have?" The man answered, "When you left your house to come to me, you thought you were better than I; that is what you have, and that is enough for you to be concerned with."

Hide your states. Sahl ibn 'Abdullah said, "Five things express the beauty of being: when the poor appear rich; when the hungry appear satisfied; when those with heavy hearts appear joyful; when love is shown to an enemy; when feebleness does not appear despite fasting the whole day and praying the whole night."

Do not let others know of your good actions. Abu 'Amr ibn Matar relates these words of Ibn Shibrimah: "When good is told, there is no longer any good in it."

Remember that you are a servant of Allah, and should not regard yourself and your actions highly, nor should expect a return for your actions. We hear from Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah al-Razi that someone asked Abul-'Abbas ibn 'Ata', "What thing most attracts Allah's anger?" He replied, "When one considers himself and his actions highly, and worse still, expects a return for his good deeds."

The masters of Futuwwah are told to give advice incessantly to their dervishes, but while they are preaching to them, they must never lose sight of the fact that many of the things that they ask of the dervishes are also missing in themselves. Badr al-Maghazili says that he asked Bishr al-Hafi, "What do you think about living in Baghdad?" and Bishr answered, "If you wish to die as a Muslim, do not stay here."

"Then why are *you* staying here?" Badr asked.

"If a servant ceases to follow Allah's commands, Allah throws him into destructive and evil place," Bishr replied. "I must have stopped following Allah's commands, for He has thrown me here."

Know that you are lacking in every sense, and do not be pleased with your state. Mansur ibn ʻAbdullah reports that Abu Yaʻqub al-Nahrajuri said: "The sign that someone is well guided by Allah is that he is aware of his lack of sincerity, his heedlessness in his remembrance of God, his lack of loyalty, and he is dissatisfied with his state. His intentions and efforts show that his need for Allah is ever increasing, until the point where he gives up all desires."

Keep an accounting of your thoughts and deeds. For that, you have to be conscious and know yourself, and you must have the conscience to regret that you are wasting your life in continuous revolt against your Creator. Al-Kattani says: "Someone from Raqqah told me that a man, in his attempt to keep an accounting of himself, had figured out that he was sixty years old. He counted the days, which totaled 21,500. He screamed in horror and fainted. When he came to, he said 'Woe to me! Even if I had sinned only once a day, I would appear in front of my Lord with 21,5000 sins. But I have sinned ten thousand times a day! What will become of me?' He passed out again. They tried to revive him and found that he was dead."

6.5 The code (*adab*) of chivalry in nobility of conduct and composure

A noble character that is expressed in action is a sign of this path. Al-Nasarabadhi tells of hearing a follower of the path say: "Nobility of character consists in holding to and acting upon Allah's Word in His Holy Book and following the example of His Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) - being soft-natured and having a happy disposition, taking care not to mistreat others, and continuously doing good. Allah Most High chose His

Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) on the basis of these sacred words:

﴿خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ﴾

> Take to forgiveness and enjoin good, and turn away from the ignorant.'" (Koran 7:199)

Be exceedingly conscious of your manners in social intercourse. Sahl ibn ʻAbdullah advised: "Be just to your enemies and benevolent and loyal to your friends."

Keep your good manners even when you are by yourself, alone with Allah. Abu Nasr al-Isfahani reports that Muhammad al-Jurayri said: "I have never sat with my legs stretched out when I was alone." Abu Bakr al-Razi reports that Abu Yazid al-Bistami related that he woke up on night, prayed, sat, and stretched his legs. He heard a voice saying, "Those who sit with a Sultan should sit with the proper manners."

Abul-Hasan ibn Samʻun said that Futuwwah is not doing in secret that which would shame you if done openly. Abul-Husayn al-Maliki said: "Futuwwah is superior character and behavior, and inner purity."

In your appearance, use and show all the signs of good behavior and moral character, and secretly and inwardly try to resolve your inner states.

Your inner feelings and the outward expression of these feelings, your whole inner being, and your total appearance must be one and the same. Abu Dujanah reports that Dhu Nun al-Misri said, "A person who does in secret what he would be ashamed to do in public has no self-respect; in fact, he does not even consider himself a living being."

In your appearance, use and show all the signs of good behavior and moral character, and secretly and inwardly try to resolve your inner states.

It is very harmful to appear in the costume of Futuwwah and assume other external signs of it before one has fulfilled its conditions and borne its heavy load. Abu ʻAbdullah al-Sajazi was asked why he was not wearing the tattered and patched cloak of the path. He answered, "It would be hypocrisy to wear the clothes that identify the followers of Futuwwah before carrying on one's

shoulders the weight of this path. A man can carry the attributes of Futuwwah only after he has tested whether or not he can support its weight."

Having good manners means showing respect to those who are superior to you; loving friendship and agreement to those who are your equals, kindness and compassion to those who are lower than you; obedience and modesty to your mother and father; and compassion in the education of children. It means caring for your womenfolk; visiting and doing good deeds for relatives; loving your brothers and eliminating all and everything that may prevent you from loving them; offering good-hearted smiles and generosity toward all humankind; knowing the values of the Sufis and respecting their rights; not showing any need toward the rich; accepting the knowledge from men who know; humbly obeying men of wisdom without negation; and fleeing from the dogmatic ones, heretics, profiteers, and men who wish to enslave others.

6.6 Listening to and speaking only truth & goodly speech, and being true to one's word

Be truthful. Abu ʻAmr Muhammad ibn Jaʻfar and Ibn Matar and Muhammad ibn Ibrahim ibn ʻAbdah declared that ʻUrwah (Allah be pleased with him) said that Sufyan ibn ʻAbdullah al-Thaqafi asked the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) to teach him so that he need never ask anyone again. The Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) answered, "Say that you believe in Allah; then always be truthful."

Close your ears to evil words and restrain your tongue so that you will not speak them.

Listen to good discourses, participate in good conversations, and abide by the prescribed behavior upon these occasions.

Keep your word and what is entrusted to you. We learn through ʻAbdullah ibn Muhammad al-Simidi that ʻAbdullah ibn ʻAmr heard the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) say: "If you have these four things, it does not matter if you lose everything else in this world: protect what is entrusted to you, tell the truth, have a noble character, and earn your income lawfully."

6.7 The equality of being accepted or rejected by all other than Allah

Receive the one who comes and do not run after the one who turns his back on you. ʻAbdul-Wahid ibn ʻAli reports that Faris said, "In accordance with their ethics, the Sufis do not reject those who come to their door, and do not pursue those who do not come; nor do they try to dominate the ones who enter their circle."

6.8 Have no enemies, especially from the generality of believers

Avoid becoming the enemy of believers because of some malice they may bear. Muhammad ibn ʻAbdul-Wahid al-Razi relates this advice of Salih ibn Hamzah: "Avoid being enemies of believers. The error of an otherwise good person or the enmity of the ignorant will not destroy you. Victory lies in being defeated by the good; true defeat lies in being defeated by evil. Stay away from evil so that evil will stay away from you."

7 Summary of the Way of Futuwwah

7.1 Service to Others

To work to serve others, Muslim and non-Muslim.

To bring joy into others lives.

To relieve others of their suffering and burdens

To show compassion and patience with others

To always give others all of their rights, without demanding our own

To serve all people equally

7.2 Graciousness, Generosity & Hospitality:

To give more of our money, time and selves to others

To have and entertain guests more often, and with more sincerity

To never refuse a guest or a visitor

7.3 Respect, Overlooking Faults, and Friendship

To respect all human beings, and all Muslims, as individuals and insofar as they are human, regardless of what their actions or states might be

To forgive others' faults, especially if they only faulted our own egos

To be unbendingly loyal to our friends

To maintain relationships

To fix old and broken relationships

To visit friends and the righteous

To put on no formalities (takalluf) between friends, nor ever see a friend as a burden no matter what the situation

To unquestioningly share one's wealth and property with true friends

To never make a financial profit off of friends

7.4 Honor

To work hard, and shun idleness

To realize that all of our sustenance – both material and spiritual – is from Allah alone

To have honor, and not abase ourselves by asking anything of anyone without genuine need

To see affluence and poverty the same, as they are both from Allah, and both – with the right intentions – paths to Allah

To hide one's good actions, and not brag nor show them off

To never speak, nor listen to, illicit or useless speech

To never make an enemy of any Muslim, as lowly or respected as they may appear

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